

The Gates of Hell

Grimoire of Cosmic Entities Volume One

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Chapter Two: Forbidden Magic

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And so it came to pass that the Clash of Spirits ended, and the gods, also known as the Saldra, looked down upon the world of Midlorr. Knowing that their foes from the Realms Beyond still lusted after the power that dwelt on Midlorr, the Saldra also knew that within their number were those willing to destroy the planet to sate their own greed. The Saldra knew that this would bring about their desolation since they would eventually need the gift of faith from the mortals yet to breathe upon Midlorr. So, rather than continue onto another battle, the Saldra agreed to a Pact of Dominance.

Through the Pact, the Saldra agreed that neither they nor the beings from Beyond would enter Midlorr. Neither through aspects of their being nor through direct intervention would this be acceptable. Yet, the Saldra knew that they needed to earn the faith of the mortals that would eventually worship them. The Saldra would grant miracles to those select mortals who wished to carry forth the will of the Saldra.

Some of the Saldra cried out, though. What would happen, these asked, if the mortals grew too strong and hoped to contest the gods? Others wondered at the mortals who would seek power from those from Beyond rather than the true gods. So, the Saldra devised another plan. They would agree with some of those from Beyond for small numbers of mortal worshippers in order to preserve the peace. Next, the Saldra bound within their Pact a weakness on mortal magic. This weakness forbids the use of any magic that would allow a cosmic or divine being direct access to Midlorr. The Saldra cursed any magic that came close to challenging their divine might when cast by mortals within Midlorr. Such power was declared Forbidden.

An excerpt from *The Pact of Dominance and the Limitations of Mortal Magic* by Seerth the Dark. The accepted date of this material is 201 of the Age of Greatness.

The above material is specific to *The Godspell Campaign*™, the official setting for Dicefreaks, and is used to explain why epic spells exist. However, in your campaign, epic spells may be par for the course for all spellcasters wielding enough might or they may not exist at all. In any case, the following details new epic seeds, incantations based upon the rules described in *Unearthed Arcana*, and the greatest forms of magic used to summon the most powerful Devils to the Material Plane.

New Epic Spell Seeds

Charm

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting]

Spellcraft DC: 14

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: 75 ft.

Target: One living creature

Duration: 20 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

Charm makes a creature regard you as a trusted friend and ally (treat the target's attitude as friendly). If the creature is currently being threatened or attacked by you or your allies, however, it receives a +5 bonus on its saving throw. This spell does not allow you to control the *charmed* creature as if it were an automaton, but it perceives your words in a most favorable way. You can try to give the subject orders, but you must win an opposed Charisma check to convince it to do anything it wouldn't ordinarily do (retries are not allowed). An affected creature never obeys suicidal or obviously harmful orders, but it might be convinced that something very dangerous is worth doing. Any act by you or your apparent allies that threatens the *charmed* creature breaks the spell. You must speak the person's language to communicate your commands, or else be good at pantomiming.

To *charm* a target so that it neither gains a bonus on its saving throw if being threatened by you or your allies, increase the Spellcraft DC by 4.

Darkness

Evocation [Darkness]

Spellcraft DC: 14

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: Touch

Target: Object touched

Duration: 20 days (D)

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This seed causes an object touched to radiate shadowy illumination out to a 60-foot radius. All creatures in the area gain concealment (20% miss chance). Even creatures that can normally see in such conditions (such as with darkvision or low-light vision) have the miss chance in an area shrouded in magical *darkness*.

Magical light produced by a spell with the epic seed *light* is temporarily negated, so that the otherwise prevailing light conditions exist in the overlapping area of effect.

Drain

Necromancy

Spellcraft DC: 19

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Target: Creature touched

Duration: Instantaneous, or see text

Saving Throw: Fortitude half

Spell Resistance: Yes

You deal the target 4 points of ability score damage to any one ability score, although a successful fortitude save reduces the damage by half. For each additional point of ability score damage to be dealt, increase the Spellcraft DC by +4.

You can instead afflict the character with ability drain; in such a case the base Spellcraft DC is 23. Whether the damage is ability damage or ability drain, a character cannot take Constitution damage or drain that

reduces him to a Constitution score of 0.

Alternatively, the caster can deal energy drain by means of this seed; in such a case the base Spellcraft DC is 23. The creature touched takes four negative levels; each additional negative level to be bestowed increases the Spellcraft DC by +6. Negative levels bestowed in this manner disappear after 20 hours; if a factor is used to increase the duration, the target must successfully save after 24 hours if the negative levels have not been removed, otherwise they automatically convert to actual level loss. Any creature that gains negative levels equal to his current levels or hit dice dies with no save.

New Epic Spells

Accursed

Transmutation [Death, Evil]

Spellcraft DC: 162

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 300 ft.

Area: 100-foot radius

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial (see below)

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 1,152,000 gp; 23 days; 46,080 XP. **Seeds:** *compel* (DC 19), *destroy* (DC 29), *reflect* (DC 27), *slay* (DC 25), *slay* (DC 25), *transform* (DC 21), *transport* (DC 27). **Factors:** area increased 400% (+10), one-action casting time (+20), victims lose all abilities and memory (ad hoc +25), memories transported across planar boundaries (+4), target to area effect (+10), increase spell's save DC by 13 (+26), bonus on caster level check to overcome spell resistance +9 (+18). **Mitigating factors:** burn 8,600 XP (-2), transforms only mortal, living humanoids, monstrous humanoids, and devils (ad hoc -10), destruction is of corpse only, and only if the slay seed is successful (ad hoc -2), reflect only prevents the soul from leaving the vicinity of the corpse (a la *dimensional anchor*) for one round (ad hoc -8), only memories are transported to Perdition (ad hoc -8), second slay seed only takes effect on failed save, and then only deals 1d4 negative levels, and only for 9 hours (ad hoc -10).

The caster of *accursed* calls on the power of Hell to transform its victims into the lemures of Perdition. In casting *accursed*, a burning miasma of brimstone and smoke vomits from the center of the area of effect. This conflagration destroys the physical body of the victim. However, the disembodied soul momentarily hovers over its corpse, held in stasis. With a word and a curse in the infernal tongue, the caster lulls the victim's soul into a trance in which it willingly swears allegiance to the Legions of Hell; the caster is treated as being 9 levels higher in terms of caster level checks to overcome spell resistance. Once completed, the victim's soul is painfully condensed into a protoplasmic husk, becoming a lemure even as the sentience and individuality of the victim descends shrieking into the Pit of Darkness. Those that manage to save still reel from the attempted violation on their soul, suffering 1d4 negative levels for nine hours. The Fortitude save DC is 33 + the relevant spellcasting ability modifier.

Once the transformation takes place, the victim has no memory of his former life, abilities, or powers. These memories are stripped from him and cast into Nessus,

the Ninth of the Nine Perditions. Furthermore, the victim is utterly reduced from whatever height he once had in terms of HD and/or class levels, starting over as a advanced lemure (for every 9 HD the victim possessed, he acquires 1 HD as a lemure to a maximum of 6 HD). The victim is now at the whim of the Lords of the Nine and the Peers of Perdition. Most accursed are sent to the front lines of Avernus where their destruction results in utter annihilation. Some are eventually promoted through the ranks as per normal.

This epic spell has always been identified with The Overlord of Hell, Asmodeus. This spell has two primary benefits to Asmodeus. Obviously, it allows Asmodeus to use the power of Hell on his foes, turning them into useful fodder for his interests. Second and more importantly, it allows him to ensure that any devil – but particularly nupperibos – can be immediately and permanently demoted to the lowest stature in Hell's Hierarchy.

All the Lords of the Nine have the ability to cast *accursed* nine times a day at triple the area of effect only on other devils or servants of Hell (those bearing the Devotee of Darkness or Soulsworn feats); this functions above and beyond their ability to cast *accursed* 3/day as a spell-like ability. Furthermore, the Lords of the Nine do not spend any experience when casting this spell, and the effect is treated as instantaneous rather than permanent.

Asmodeus has the ability to temporarily confer the power of this ability to designees nine times per day. In these cases, the beneficiaries of this power may cast *accursed* once per day for as long as Asmodeus sees fit to allow it, receiving a +45 Spellcraft bonus on casting attempts.

XP Cost: 8,600 XP.

Asmodeus' Heretical Infection

Transmutation [Death, Evil]

Spellcraft DC: 126

Components: V (Dark Speech), XP

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 300 feet

Target: 40 foot radius

Duration: 27 rounds (see below)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 1,134,000 gp; 23 days; 45,360 XP. **Seeds:** *afflict* (DC 14), *reflect* (DC 27), *slay* (DC 25), *transform* (DC 21), *transform* (DC 21), *transform* (DC 21). **Factors:** one action casting time (+20), no somatic component (+2), restricted cancellation of effects – see below (ad hoc +20), target to area effect (+16), increase area by 100% (+4), increase negative levels by 1d4 (+4). **Mitigating Factors:** burn 5,400 XP (-54), caster possesses the Dark Speech feat (ad hoc -2), 27 round duration (ad hoc -13).

The Overlord of Hell knows that The Word is the center of all Creation. Without The Word, nothing would exist. The Overlord, alongside The Progenitor of Order and The Supreme Virtue, used The Word to manifest the Laws that bind the Cosmos into its current configuration. It is this very same Word that allows gods to create, destroy, and rule over the Material Plane. It is that very same Word, in vastly smaller concentrations, that allows lesser beings to manipulate the energy around them. Among mortals, the greatest aspects of The Word

revolve around those spells related to the cosmic and divine, those tinged with morality. After all, these Words, like *holy word* or *cloak of chaos*, allow divine spellcasters within the Material Plane to stave off the attacks of Asmodeus' servants. Yet, these spells as spoken by mortals pale before the might and conviction with which The King of Hell speaks The Word. Before him, all other Words falter. There is no greater testament to this than *Asmodeus' heretical infection*.

With a terrible whisper of Dark Speech fouler than any save that uttered by Leonar, the caster of *heretical infection* targets all good-aligned spellcasters within a 40-foot radius. If a Fortitude save is failed, the victim is infected as he feels an oily, malevolent darkness writhe in the bottom of his soul. However, the victim does not know the depths of his dilemma until he attempts to cast any spell with the good descriptor (this includes exalted spells from the *Book of Exalted Deeds*). When such spells are cast, the victim finds that billowing fumes of black and red energy vomit from his eyes and mouth as the elements of his spell's intent are reversed or outright cancelled. Thus, the casting of *holy aura* by a cleric suffering from *heretical infection* results in the spell functioning as *unholy aura*; if there is not a clear opposite, the spell simply does not function. Worse still, if the spell cast requires a verbal component, the caster finds that he screeches out heretical or blasphemous repudiations of his faith, suffering 2d6 negative levels; this spell is so pervasive that even if the caster prepares and casts spells bearing the good descriptor by means of the Silent Spell feat he still suffers 1d6 negative levels.

To further bolster the power of Evil and the unity of Law, *Asmodeus' heretical infection* also forces the infected to answer in chorus to all other terrible spells. When spells bearing the evil descriptor or empowered by Dark Speech are cast within 100 feet of a *heretical infection* victim, the victim must make a Fortitude saving throw with a penalty equal to the spell's effective level (taking into account feat increases) or repeat the same spell on his next turn. Not only does the victim suffer the effects detailed above, he also burns the appropriate spell levels, starting from the highest possible spell slot available (the victim will also suffer any ill effects associated with casting corrupt, vile, or evil spells against good-aligned casters as well as the effects of using Dark Speech).

It is very difficult to cancel the effects of *Asmodeus' heretical infection*. First, aside from the caster, only a *disjunction* can end the effect before its duration expires. Second, even if the spell is cancelled or expires, the negative levels remain for 24 hours, converting to actual level loss after that time (this can be negated by a successful save for each negative level at the 24 hour mark) and permanently remaining unless a good-aligned 31st level cleric casts *greater restoration* within 9 days.

XP Cost: 5,400 XP.

Cold Anchor to the Soul

Abjuration [Evil]

Spellcraft DC: 137

Components: None

Casting Time: 1 free action

Range: Personal

Area: 90-ft. radius emanation centered on the caster

Duration: 20 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 1,233,000 gp; 25 days; 49,320 XP. **Seeds:** *afflict* (DC 14), *banish* (DC 27), *transport* (DC 27). **Factors:** alter effect from banishment to entrapment (ad hoc +2), increase maximum total Hit Dice affected by 85 (+42), quickened spell (+28), change target to 20-ft. radius area (+10), increase area by 350% (+14), increase spell's saving throw DC by +5 (+10). **Mitigating factors:** only affect the souls of those who have died within the area of effect (ad hoc -10), facilitate transport of souls via teleport, planeshift and the like, but do not provide those actual travel-related effects by means of this spell (ad hoc -11), burn 1,600 XP (-16).

As a free action that counts as a quickened spell, the caster sets in place a hellfire-red net of energy that thrums and throbs in a 90-ft. radius, centered on the caster. All creatures in possession of a soul that die throughout the duration of the spell are anchored to the caster, unable to leave for the next plane of existence, and unable to be *raised*, *resurrected*, or *true resurrected*. A soul is entitled to a Will save to negate the effect, but the save DC is equal to 25 + the caster's spellcasting ability modifier. No more than 100 Hit Dice worth of creatures can be affected per casting of this spell.

If the caster travels to another plane, the anchor remains in effect, dragging any souls with him to the new destination.

This spell was originally developed by Mephistopheles.

XP Cost: 1,600 XP.

Condemn

Conjuration (summoning, teleportation) [Evil]

Spellcraft DC: 71

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 300 ft.

Target: 1 creature with a soul

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 639,000 gp; 13 days; 25,560 XP. **Seeds:** *reveal* (DC 19), *summon* (DC 14), *transport* (DC 27).

Factors: transport unwilling creature (+4), strip soul from target (ad hoc +23), one-action casting time (+20), change from touch to target within 300 ft. (+4), increase spell's saving throw DC by +10 (+20). **Mitigating factors:** caster takes 10d6 backlash damage (-10), burn 5,000 XP (-50)

A hell-red light enters the caster's eyes and encases his hands as he calls the soul of the targeted creature from its body and sends it directly to hell; the infernal energies manipulated to perform this feat deal 10d6 points of damage to the caster. The shell of a body which remains is effectively dead, although successful retrieval of the soul can allow the creature to live again without the need for *resurrection*; in the meanwhile, the body starts to rot and decay (and without magical intervention to prevent decomposition, the body will be unable to be returned to short of *resurrection* or the like within 24 hours). The target is entitled to a Will save to negate the spell's effect; the DC is equal to 30 + the relevant spell-casting ability modifier.

Within Hell, the creature's soul is quickly claimed by

a Lord or Courtier of Perdition who has the greatest claim on it. For example, a warmonger's soul is likely to be claimed by Bael, while a tyrannical despot may be claimed by Asmodeus himself. Typically, unless the soul is of some importance, the creature is transformed into a lemure in short order.

XP Cost: 5,000 XP

Contingent True Resurrection

Conjuration (Healing)

Spellcraft DC: 80

Components: V, S, DF

Casting Time: 1 round

Range: Touch

Target: You or creature touched

Duration: Contingent until expended, then instantaneous

Saving Throw: None (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

To Develop: 720,000 gp; 15 days; 28,800 XP. **Seed:** *life* (DC 27). **Factors:** activates when subject is slain (+25 DC), no loss of level or Constitution when resurrected (ad hoc +10), decrease casting time by 9 rounds (+18).

Contingent true resurrection works as per *contingent resurrection*, save that the resurrected creature does not lose a level (or 1 point of Constitution if the subject was first level), and the time between death and resurrection is only 1 round.

Curse of Apostasy

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Evil, Mind-Affecting]

Spellcraft DC: 66

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 75 ft., see text

Target: Up to 6 living creatures

Duration: 20 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 594,000 gp; 12 days; 23,760 XP. **Seed:** *compel* (DC 19). **Factors:** one action casting time (+20), infect others by means of speech (up to five others, ad hoc +60). **Mitigating Factors:** burn 3,300 XP (-33).

A malevolent, gleeful light enters the casters eyes, as he points and commands a single target to forsake his foolish beliefs and follow the true path. Should the target fail a Will save, he thereafter apostatizes from his most important beliefs (forsakes his religion, ethics, and so forth). He perceives instructions from the caster in a most favorable light, although he will not act to harm himself. The affected target is compelled to seek to persuade those around him to forsake their most important beliefs as well (these new apostates would then seek to convince others as well); up to five additional targets beyond the first can be affected in this manner, all of them receiving a Will save at the original DC to avoid the effect. To be affected, a new target need only hear a previous target speak for a round. No more than six creatures can be affected by a single casting of this spell, and after 20 hours, the compulsion wears off, and the affected targets no longer infect others with their speech. Those that were affected remember their actions during the period of compulsion, and are usually hostile to the caster thereafter. Any "sins" committed while under this

compulsion render class abilities dependent on conduct inaccessible until *atoned* for, as per usual.

Although this spell affects a maximum of six creatures (and all six are affected identically), the use of Diplomacy and Intimidation may in fact cause others to stray from their beliefs and "sin". Powerful devils use this spell to spread a wide net of apostasy in relatively short period of time. Carreau is attributed as its author.

XP Cost: 3,300 XP.

Dispater's Iron Defense

Psychokinesis [Death, Force]

Psicraft DC: 127

Display: Vi, Au

Casting Time: Immediate action

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: 33 hours

Saving Throw: None; see text

Power Resistance: Yes (harmless)

To Develop: 1,143,000 gp, 23 days, 45,720 XP. **Seeds:** *armor* (DC 14), *destroy* (DC 29), *fortify* (DC 17), *fortify* (DC 27), *transform* (DC 31). **Factors:** cast as an immediate action (ad hoc +36), grant bonus to spell resistance or saves of +6 (+10), grant insight bonus to armor class of +6 (+50), grant fast healing 12 (+66), caster can become incorporeal as an immediate action, or change bonus to saves, spell resistance or armor class to a different bonus to one of those three (ad hoc +16), caster can dismiss incorporeal aspect of the power as a free action (+8), increase duration by 165% (+4), increase duration by 330% when within the Iron Tower (ad hoc +1), increase damage dealt by destruction seed by . **Mitigating factors:** only allow one bonus to either spell resistance, saves or armor class at a time (ad hoc -30), change target to personal (-2), burn 15,000 XP (-150)

From within his Iron Tower, the Lord of the Second seeks to protect himself from all powers, for he schemes to place himself above all others. To this end, he developed the *iron defense* epic power.

The manifester of this epic power is able to manifest it as an immediate action (see p.59 of the *Expanded Psionics Handbook* for details on immediate actions).

Upon activating this power, the manifester's eyes begin to glow like molten iron, and the susurrations of thousands of blades whisking through the air (akin to the sound of a *blade barrier* spell) can be heard within the vicinity. The manifester chooses whether to apply a +6 bonus to his spell resistance (enhancement bonus), armor class (insight bonus) or saving throws (resistance bonus) when first manifesting the power; as an immediate action, the manifester can switch freely between the different bonuses while the power's duration lasts. The manifester also gains fast healing 12, and can choose to become incorporeal as an immediate action (returning to a corporeal state is a free action) – Dispater uses this aspect of the power to become incorporeal just as an opponent tries to strike him in combat, or as additional protection against hostile powers and spells. Any weapon that does strike the manifester must make a Fort save DC 20 + the relevant manifesting ability score modifier or be destroyed (or, at the least, take 20d6 points of pure destructive energy); this damage is dealt to the creature if it attacks with natural weapons (including bullrush, grapple and similar attempts). A successful save deals half dam-

age.

If cast within the Iron Tower, the duration of this power is doubled (66 hours).

XP Cost: 15,000 XP.

Dust in the Wind

Psychoportation

Psicraft DC: 114

Components: Vi, XP

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 100 feet

Area: 100-foot radius, centered on the caster

Duration: Permanent (see text)

Saving Throw: Fortitude negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 1,026,000 gp; 21 days; 41,040 XP. **Seeds:** *drain* (DC 19), *energy* (weather effects) (DC 25), *transform* (DC 21). **Factors:** transform living into nonliving (+10), reduce to 1-action casting time (+20), change target to 20-foot radius (+12), increase area to 100-foot radius (+16), increase save DC by 30 (+60), specific method of breaking spell (ad hoc +10). **Mitigating factors:** burn 6000 XP (-60).

Drawing upon the winds of time, the manifester unleashes temporal energies which instantly age his foes to time forgotten statues of sand, which are then blown away, scattered to the end of the earth.

Creatures and objects in the affected area who fail their saves are instantly turned into sand sculptures. Within 10 minutes, a fierce wind then blows through the area, scattering the dust over a 2 mile area and destroying the sculptures.

Because the creatures affected are not dead, they can not be restored with *true resurrection* or spells using the life seed. A *wish* or *miracle* can gather the dust, but a successful caster level check against Dust in the Wind must be made in order to break the spell (using *break enchantment*, *greater dispel magic*, or similar effects). If the dust is not placed back in the exact form of the creature (requiring a successful Craft: sculpture check equal to 25 + the creature's HD), the creature is dead upon the breaking of the enchantment. If the creature is brought to life via a means that does not normally cost it a level (such as *true resurrection*), it loses one level and one permanent point of Constitution. If it is brought to life via a means that normally costs levels or Constitution, it loses both the level and point of Constitution in addition to whatever penalties the recovering spell inflicts.

XP Cost: 6,000 XP

Epic Dimension Door

Transmutation [Teleportation]

Spellcraft DC: 125

Components: XP

Casting Time: 1 free action

Range: Touch

Target: You and touched objects or creatures weighing up to 1,000 lb

Duration: 10 rounds or 3 rounds (see text)

Saving Throw: None or Will negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: No or yes (see text)

To Develop: 855,000 gp; 18 days; 34,200 XP. **Seeds:** *transport* (DC 27). **Factors:** allow use of shadow or ethereal plane for instantaneous travel as required (+4),

allow transport of unwilling creatures that fail a Will save (+4), allow interplanar travel (+4), cast as a free action (+28), allow spell to last 3 rounds, but with 2 uses of epic dimension door per round (ad hoc +8), change duration to 10 rounds (ad hoc x3). **Mitigating factors:** burn 10,000 XP (-100)

As a free action that counts as a quickened spell, the caster makes use of the astral, ethereal or shadow plane to travel instantaneously to any point on any plane to which she has at least a reliable description of. She may take with her up to 1,000 lb of creatures and/or objects, but she must be touching them when she uses *epic dimension door* to take them with her. Unwilling creatures or objects are entitled to a Will save to avoid the effect, and spell resistance applies in such situations. Each round after the 1st round (for a total of 10 rounds) the caster can teleport as a free action once again, using the same guidelines.

Alternatively, the caster can choose to cast the spell so that it lasts only 3 rounds, enabling her to use the effects of the spell twice per round (i.e. two free action *teleportations* per round for 3 rounds). Thus, the caster could feasibly *teleport* into a high security cell of which she had obtained a reliable description, grab hold of her imprisoned companion, and *teleport* out again in the same round.

XP Cost: 10,000 XP.

Esoteric Aegis

Abjuration

Spellcraft DC: 83

Components: V, S

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Personal

Effect: 10-ft. radius emanation

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

To Develop: 747,000 gp, 15 days, 29,880 XP. **Seeds:** *ward* (DC 14), *transform* (DC 21). **Factors:** gain +10 bonus on DC to avoid being dispelled (ad hoc +20), make spell effect tenacious (as per the feat) (ad hoc +10), end dispel checks that fail to dispel this spell automatically (ad hoc +4), ward against *mage's disjunction* (+16). **Mitigating factors:** change range from touch to personal (-2)

The caster calls upon the very fabric of magic to fashion a ward to protect his own working of the Word from those that would tear it down. A shimmering, dusky globe surrounds the caster, intercepting any attempts to end his spells by means of *dispel* magic, or similar spells and epic spells, and providing a +10 bonus on the DC against which the *dispel* attempt must succeed. Any *dispel* attempt which succeeds can then proceed as normal, but *esoteric aegis* works as if under the effects of the Tenacious Magic feat, and thus cannot be *dispelled*, only suppressed for 1d4 rounds. *Dispel* attempts that fail are not entitled to checks against lesser spells within the area of effect (this differs from the usual procedure of area *dispel* magic attempts). Furthermore, *mage's disjunction* is warded against in its entirety.

First Taste of Winter

Transmutation

Spellcraft DC: 101
Components: V, S, XP
Casting Time: 1 action
Range: 300 ft.
Area: 40-ft. radius
Duration: 1 round/level
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 909,000 gp, 19 days, 36,360 XP. **Seeds:** *transform* (DC 21), *dispel* (DC 19), *foresee* (DC 17). **Factors:** change creature to cold vulnerable (ad hoc +20), increase dispel check bonus to +20 (+10), make spell effect tenacious (as per the feat) (ad hoc +10), 1 action casting time (+20), change target to 20 ft radius area (+10), increase area by 100% (+4). **Mitigating factors:** change from permanent to 1 round/level (ad hoc -10), burn 1,700 XP during casting (-17), only dispel spells that protect against cold (ad hoc -10).

Making the sign of the triangle with his hands, the caster calls upon those within the area to be affected to surrender themselves to the cold of winter. The affected area erupts in black energy as all are targeted with an area *dispel magic* (1d20+20) that only targets spells and items that protect against cold effects. A second wave of energy emerges a split second later, appearing as a solid sphere of ice that shatters the moment it appears and immediately melts away. Creatures must save against DC 20 + the relevant spellcasting modifier or become vulnerable to cold damage (i.e. cold damage deals an additional 50% damage). Creatures normally immune or resistance to cold lose such protection against cold for the duration of the spell, and are also treated as vulnerable to cold.

Although the effect can be dispelled, it is treated as being tenacious. In other words, a successful dispel attempt merely suppresses the effect for 1d4 rounds.

This spell was first designed by Leonar, the Chancellor of Cania and Duke of the Infernal Tongue.

XP Cost: 1,700 XP

Greater Epic Mage Armor *Conjuration (Creation) [Force]*

Spellcraft DC: 70
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 72 hours (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)

To Develop: 630,000 gp; 13 days; 25,200 XP. **Seed:** *armor* (DC 14). **Factors:** +36 additional armor bonus (+72), increase duration by 200% (+4). **Mitigating Factor:** increase casting time by 9 minutes (-18), change target to personal (-2).

Greater epic mage armor works as per *epic mage armor*, except that it grants a +40 armor bonus to Armor Class, and lasts for 3 days.

Leonar's Thaumaturgic Boost *Transmutation (Evil)*

Spellcraft DC: 110
Components: V, S, Ritual
Casting Time: 10 minutes (contingency)

Range: Touch
Target: Creature touched
Duration: 33 hours
Saving Throw: Will negates (harmless)
Spell Resistance: Yes (harmless)
To Develop: 990,000 gp, 20 days, 39,600 XP. **Seeds:** *fortify* (DC 27), *fortify* (DC 27), *fortify* (DC 27). **Factors:** Increase save DC of any three spells during the duration by +9 (ad hoc +36), contingent on specific trigger (+25), add evil descriptor (ad hoc +2), increase duration by 65% (+2). **Mitigating Factors:** Increase casting time by 9 minutes (-18), two additional casters contributing 5th level spell slots (-18).

The caster speaks aloud in the Dark Speech whilst drawing infernal symbols in the air, the ritual participants chanting words of power all the while. Throughout the casting time, a dark mist gathers at their feet, sparked periodically by flashes of red lightning and cold blue flames. At the end of the casting, the ritual participants sacrifice one fifth level spell each, whereupon the mist becomes entirely charged with the cold blue flames. Forming unholy symbols, the blue-black mist is drawn into the primary caster's body.

Thereafter, at any point within 33 hours of casting, the primary caster can add +9 when setting the save DC for any three spells that she casts. Each time when doing so, black frost spiderwebs across her hands and feet, melting away at the end of the spell's casting time.

Lilith's Life Siphon

Necromancy [Evil]
Spellcraft DC: 102
Components: V, S, XP
Casting Time: 10 minutes
Range: 60-ft

Area: 60-ft radius emanation, centered on the caster
Duration: 60 hours
Saving Throw: Fortitude half
Spell Resistance: Yes
To Develop: 918,000 gp; 19 days; 36,720 XP. **Seeds:** *drain* (DC 23), *fortify* (DC 17), *transform* (DC 21). **Factors:** change target from touch to 20-ft radius emanation (+14), increase area by 200 % (+8), allow caster to decide each round what ability to drain, or whether to instead deal energy drain (ad hoc +6), increase damage die by 3 steps (+30), allow duration to be set by the fortify seed (ad hoc +13), increase ability drain by 2 points (+8), increase duration by 200% (+4). **Mitigating factors:** increase casting time by 9 minutes (-18), burn 2,400 XP (-24).

Speaking in a measured cadence, the caster opens her arms to the earth beneath, and demands the power of those that walk it. An inky cloud, half-hidden from vision, permeates the area of effect, centered on the caster. Any living creature that enters the cloud has its life steadily siphoned away.

The caster can decide round by round what ability score the cloud will drain, or whether the cloud will instead deal energy drain. Each creature within the area of effect is entitled to a Fortitude saving throw to take only half damage of 4d4 points of ability drain, or 4d4 negative levels. Failure, of course, means that the creature takes the damage in full.

The drain dealt to each creature is tabulated separately, and the caster receives an enhancement bonus to

an ability score equal to one quarter of the amount drained from a particular creature. Thus if Lilith were to cast this spell and drain 13 points of Strength from a human paladin, she would gain a +3 enhancement bonus to Strength for the duration of the spell. If an elven wizard entered the area of effect in the next round, so that both the wizard and the paladin took 8 points of Strength damage, she would gain an enhancement bonus to Strength of +5 (one quarter of the 21 points of Strength drain dealt in total to the paladin). Enhancement bonuses granted in this fashion last for 20 minutes.

In the case of energy drain, the caster receives 5 temporary hit points for each negative level bestowed upon a creature. Temporary hit points granted in this fashion last for 20 minutes. The negative levels last for 24 hours, at which time the affected creature must make another Fortitude save for each negative level received (at the spell's original save DC), with success meaning that the negative levels disappear. A failure converts the negative levels to actual level loss.

XP Cost: 2,400 XP.

Long Arm of the Treacher

Clairsentience

Psicraft DC: 115

Display: None

Manifesting Time: 10 minutes

Range: See text

Effect: Magical sensor

Duration: 20 minutes (D)

Saving Throw: None

Power Resistance: No

To Develop: 1,035,000 gp; 21 days; 41,400 XP. **Seed:** *reveal* (DC 19). **Factors:** allow manifester to both see and hear through sensor (+2), manifest any powers using sensor as origin point (+6), no display (+4), free manifester from the need to maintain line of effect to the sensor in order to cast spells through it (x10). **Mitigating factors:** burn 16,700 XP during manifesting (-167), increase casting time by 9 minutes (-18), only allow sensor to exist within the being of a creature under the effects of the *trojan curse* epic power (ad hoc -10).

The manifester can only use this spell in conjunction with the *trojan curse* epic power. With the target creature firmly in the grip of the *trojan curse*, the manifester calls on his power over such a creature to manifest a magical sensor within said creature. The manifester is thereafter able to see and hear as if in the place of the target creature for the duration of the spell.

Using the sensor as a focal point, the manifester is able to manifest powers through the target creature for the duration of the power.

Leviathan is the author of this power, and its greatest wielder.

XP Cost: 16,700 XP.

Lure of Loquacity

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Spellcraft DC: 93

Components: V

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: 75 ft.

Area: 20-ft. radius

Duration: 99 hours (D)

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 837,000 gp, 17 days, 33,480 XP. **Seeds:** *compel* (DC 19). **Factors:** 1-action casting time (+20), no somatic component (+2), change target to 20-ft. radius area (+2), increase spell's saving throw DC by +20 (+40), dismissible by caster (+2), increase duration by 495% (+10).

Originally designed by Murmer, Duke of Philosophy, the caster of this spell calls on those within the target area to speak their minds, and leave nothing out. All those within the area of effect who fail a Will save with a +20 bonus to the usual DC, find themselves speaking aloud regarding all their thoughts, and doing so with more words than are absolutely necessary. Communication or other activities that rely on speech takes three times as long as usual (and thus spells with verbal components take three times as long to cast, generally three standard actions). In combat, creatures under the influence of the spell will clearly reveal what their tactics are as they go about their maneuvers. Bluffing becomes impossible; the use of Diplomacy and Intimidate may likewise be affected at the discretion of the DM, and depending on the affected creature's real feelings about those with whom he treats.

Mephistopheles' Frore Blast

Evocation (Cold)

Spellcraft DC: 144

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 90 ft.

Area: A cone-shaped burst

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: Fortitude partial

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 1,296,000 gp; 26 days; 51,840 XP. **Seeds:** *drain* (DC 19), *energy* (DC 19), *transform* (DC 21). **Factors:** increase cold damage by 56d6 (+112), increase Dexterity damage by 14 (+56), transform affected creatures into chunks of ice (+10), 1-action casting time (+20), change area to 40-ft cone (+2), increase area by 125% (+5), increase spell's saving throw DC by 20 (+40). **Mitigating factors:** burn 15,000 XP during casting (-150), caster takes 10d6 points of backlash damage (-10)

There are few creatures in creation that can withstand the effects of the *frore blast*. Drawing on the cold that existed in the nothingness before creation, the caster forces that energy outwards in a 90-ft cone directly before him, transforming the landscape into so much ice.

Creatures caught within the cone take 66d6 points of cold damage, 18 points of Dexterity damage, and are transformed into statues of ice and frost. A successful fortitude save halves the cold and Dexterity damage, and negates the transformation effect. Creatures immune to cold still take the Dexterity damage and are still subject to being transmuted into ice. Objects are likewise affected (although attended or magical objects are entitled to a Fortitude save to take partial damage only).

The cold that courses through the caster is so intense that it likewise deals 10d6 points of damage to the caster; this cannot be avoided in any fashion.

Mephistopheles often casts this after his opponents have been struck with the epic spell *first taste of winter*.

XP Cost: 15,000 XP

Miasma of Hatred

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Spellcraft DC: 81

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 300 ft

Area: 90-ft radius

Duration: 20 minutes

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 729,000 gp, 15 days, 29,160 XP. **Seed:** *afflict* (14). **Factors:** change from target to 20-ft radius area (+15), increase area by 350% (+14), increase penalty on attack rolls, checks and saving throws by 7 (+42).

Mitigating factors: burn 400 XP during casting (-4)

This spell allows all living creatures in a 90-foot radius to feel of the caster's hatred and disdain, the center-point being anywhere within 300 feet of the caster. The caster first wounds himself whilst pronouncing woe upon those to be targeted. From his wound, a portion of his hate tears forth, springing towards the target area like lightning the color of blood. Upon reaching the designated epicenter, the missile of hate and oppression explodes, forcing all living creatures within the area to make a Will save or suffer a -9 penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws.

XP Cost: 400 XP

Oppress

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-affecting]

Spellcraft DC: 99

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 150 ft.

Target: 1 living creature

Duration: 20 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 891,000 gp, 18 days, 35640 XP. **Seeds:** *afflict* (DC 14), *compel* (19), *dispel* (DC 19), *transform* (DC 21). **Factors:** One action casting time (+20), range increase 100% (+2), compel unreasonable actions (+10), increase on dispel check of +20 (+20). **Mitigating Factors:** burn 2,600XP (-26).

Upon casting this spell, the caster makes the sign of the evil eye whilst commanding the target to serve him unquestionably. The target creature is first targeted by a dispel magic check (1d20 + 30) to negate any ongoing effects that protect against mind-affecting spells. Assuming any such wards are removed, the target creature is forced to make a Will save, otherwise doing the bidding of the caster for the next 20 hours. Should the target be commanded to perform some action that he would normally consider reprehensible, or that is self-destructive in nature, he does not gain an extra Will save to avoid the compulsion – any command given to the affected creature will be obeyed to the best of the creature's ability. Creature's with an intelligence score usually unaffected by mind-affecting spells become susceptible to this spell and other mind-affecting effects for the duration of the spell.

For the duration of the spell, the target creature is treated as shaken.

XP Cost: 2,600 XP.

The Serpent's Sibilant Whisper

Enchantment (Charm) [Evil, Mind-Affecting]

Spellcraft DC: 126

Components: V, XP

Casting Time: 1 standard action

Range: See below

Target: One creature

Duration: 9 days

Saving Throw: Will negates

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 1,134,000 gp; 23 days; 45,360 XP. **Seeds:** *charm* (DC 14), *compel* (DC 19), *contact* (DC 23). **Factors:** one action casting time (+20), communicate regardless of language (+4), conceal enchantment (ad hoc +18), 9 day duration (+21), no somatic component (+2), unwilling victim (ad hoc +20), increase save DC for antithetical actions by +1 each day over 8 days (ad hoc +8), effectively increase final save DC to resist becoming a thrall by an additional +9 (+18), specified and difficult removal process (ad hoc +10). **Mitigating Factors:** burn 4,900 XP (-49), caster possesses the Dark Speech feat (ad hoc -2).

One of The Overlords favorite forms of Forbidden Magic, *the serpent's sibilant whisper* allows him to tempt any and all beings, even across planar boundaries. He knows well that in the hearts of all beings that there is a degree of evil and the desire to control the destinies of others. The Lord of the Nine has uncovered many ways to awaken these attitudes and this is one of most insidious means in doing so. However, due to his time spent ruling the Nine Hells of Perdition, Asmodeus has given knowledge of this terrible spell to the greatest of his Cardinals over the years. Now, those with the money and the desire have the capacity to learn this terrible spell.

Serpent's sibilant whisper may be cast so long as the caster knows the name and general identity of the intended victim. The spell may reach the victim anywhere save places designated as "dead magic areas" (although the usual rules on epic magic apply within an *anti-magic field* or similar), within a divine shield, or within the realm of a cosmic entity or god (except on a successful opposed rank check). The victim receives a Will save to avoid the attack; the only indication the victim receives of an attack is a momentary feeling of something slithering up her body and constricting her. If the victim fails the saving throw, for the next nine days, she is *charmed* by the voice in her head. The voice always sounds like the victim's and is often perceived as typical thinking, although with a certain degree of insistency that feels almost like a sixth sense. The caster, for his part, may now see and hear what the victim sees and hears, although that is the extent of his sensory knowledge of the victim's condition.

The caster may offer suggestion and advice to the victim as per the *charm* seed with the exception of saving throw modifiers. If the whispered advice offers the victim an option antithetical or immoral to the victim's alignment, she receives a Will save to avoid the effect. For each day that the victim's soul is constricted by the *serpent*, the Will save DC to overcome ethical and/or

moral issues increases by +1. Either way, the usual goal of the casting of this spell is to lead the victim down a dark path and into damnation. Thus, every three actions the victim undertakes that directly perpetuate Lawful Evil principles result in the victim's alignment shifting one step closer to Lawful Evil. For example, if the victim is convinced to allow the assassination of a Lawful Neutral judge, thereby paving the way for a thieves' guild leader to get away on a technicality of the law, the action (or inaction, in this case), counts as Lawful Evil for the purpose of this spell. If and when the victim becomes Lawful Evil, she gains one last save with a -9 penalty (this stacks with the daily increases on the DC). If she fails, not only does she become Lawful Evil permanently, she also becomes a permanent thrall to the caster, even if she does not know this explicitly.

It is very difficult to identify and overcome this terrible spell. Any attempt to discern enchantment effects, like the use of Sense Motive, are confronted by a -9 penalty on the check per day that the victim is under the influence of the *serpent*. *True seeing* may be used to identify the spell, but only if the intended purpose is to find some force controlling or manipulating the victim; even so, *true seeing* only offers a 33% chance of revealing anything unusual. Once this spell is identified, the examiner sees a large, reddish, serpentine shadow on the victim. For more recent castings or for victims who have overcome the temptations, the snake is small and perched at the shoulder near the ear; older castings or those in which the victim has gone almost completely into the lure of Lawful Evil, the *serpent's* coils are wrapped around the victim's body, its tongue lodged in the victim's ear.

Once the *serpent* is uncovered, only *greater restoration* followed immediately by a *miracle* can cancel the effect (it is possible that the caster will notice what is going on if he has Sense Motive and/or Spellcraft).

XP Cost: 4,900 XP.

Soul Hold

Transmutation (Calling) [Death, Evil]

Spellcraft DC: 80

Components: V, S, M, F, XP

Casting Time: 9 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: One living creature touched

Duration: Permanent

Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes (see text)

To Develop: 720,000 gp; 15 days; 28,800 XP. **Seeds:** *afflict* (DC 14), *contact* (DC 23), *slay* (DC 25), *summon* (DC 14), *transform* (DC 21). **Factors:** change target to creature touched (+4), transfer a portion of the target's soul to a receptacle (ad hoc +5), afflict target so that they are dazed or sickened at the caster's choice (ad hoc +4), increase spell's saving throw DC by 20 (+40). **Mitigating factors:** increase casting time by 8 minutes (-16), burn 5,000 XP at time of casting (-50), requires an expensive focus (ad hoc -2), requires a difficult material component (ad hoc -2)

Soul hold, like non-epic spells such as *mark of justice*, can generally only be performed on targets that are willing (*compelled* creatures count as willing) or restrained. The caster must have on hand a gemstone set within a gold or silver stylized cage to the value of 18,000 gp;

this will be the receptacle for the stolen portion of the target's soul.

For nine minutes the caster speaks the arcane words of binding, touching the target periodically with the focus, and slowly drawing out some of the essence of the target's soul. At the climax of the spell, the caster pierces the skin at the back of the target's hand (or a similar, appropriate appendage), so that the blood runs over the cage and gem. Simultaneously, he expends 5,000 XP to seal the effect of the spell. An unwilling target is entitled to a Will save (DC = 40 + the caster's relevant spellcasting ability score modifier) to negate the effect, but willing targets, or targets who are Soulsword to the caster, are automatically affected.

From that time on, the caster is able to do certain things to a creature over which he has a *soul hold*, so long as he is touching the gemstone focus. Firstly, he can afflict the creature's soul in a most unpleasant manner, leaving the target creature dazed or sickened. Secondly, he can sense the whereabouts of the creature perfectly, and can speak with the creature by means of telepathy over any distance, even over planar boundaries. Finally, the caster can kill the creature with no save, although this ends the spell. The soul of the creature passes in its entirety through the gem before passing on to its proper plane of existence (this does provide a window of opportunity to entrap the soul and prevent *resurrection*, although other magicks must be used to accomplish such a thing). By means of these things, the caster can often obtain the services and obedience of the target creature, if only out of fear for the welfare of its eternal soul.

Rumor has it that this spell was first developed by Mephistopheles, Lord-Regent of Cania.

XP Cost: 5,000 XP.

Summoning Sanctuary

Abjuration

Spellcraft DC: 80

Components: Components

Casting Time: 1 minute

Range: Touch

Effect: 30-ft. spherical emanation

Duration: 24 hours

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 720,000 gp; 15 days; 28,800 XP. **Seed:** *ward* (DC 14). **Factors:** increase area of effect by 200% (+8), increase bonus on caster level check to overcome spell resistance by +20 (+40), determine creature type to be warded against at the time of casting this spell (ad hoc +4), prevent spiritual wounds within summoning area (ad hoc +14).

This spell creates an area in preparation for summoning a powerful creature. Proof only against physical attacks, it prevents the next summoned creature, and all other creatures of that type summoned into the area for the duration of the sanctuary, from leaving a 30-foot spherical emanation area by any means. The summoned creature may be able to break past the barrier by means of its spell resistance, in which case the caster makes a caster level check with a +20 bonus.

Additionally, the typical effects of summoning a powerful cosmic entity to the Prime are ignored if the creature is summoned within a *summoning sanctuary*. Thus summoning or calling a Duke of Hell to the Prime in

conjunction with this spell has none of the ill effects mentioned in Chapter One.

Trojan Curse

Telepathy (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]

Psicraft DC: 115

Display: None

Manifesting Time: 1 round

Range: 75 ft.

Target: One living creature

Duration: 1 week

Saving Throw: Will negates

Power Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 1,035,000 gp; 21 days; 41,400 XP. **Seeds:** *compel* (DC 19), *conceal* (DC 17). **Factors:** unobtrusive (ad hoc +6), manifest as a full-round action (+18), conceal from magical or psionic detection (+6), compel creature to follow unreasonable course of action (+10), increase duration by 740% (+15), no display (+4), increase power's save DC by 10 (+20)

The manifester concentrates on the desired target, willing into existence a hidden presence within the target's being. If the target fails a Will saving throw (save DC 30 + manifesting ability modifier), he can thereafter be compelled by the manifester to do anything at the caster's whim, from any distance, even across planes. As with the non-epic spell *dominate person*, the caster can concentrate on the spell as a standard action to receive full sensory input as interpreted by the mind of the subject (the caster cannot actually see or hear at the target's location, but has a good idea of what is happening there). The compulsion is unobtrusive, and is usually left latent until some point where the target's "treachery" is of greatest potential efficacy. The *trojan curse* can only be detected by divinations if the caster of the divination succeeds on a caster level check against the manifester of the *trojan curse*.

The *trojan curse* lasts for one week, even if the target has already fulfilled the primary purpose of the manifester. However, evil psions tend to compel those under the effect of the *trojan curse* to kill themselves once their task is finished.

The Prince himself, Leviathan, first developed this epic power.

Tyranny

Enchantment (Charm) [Mind-Affecting, Evil]

Spellcraft DC: 79

Components: V, S, XP

Casting Time: 1 action

Range: 75 ft.

Target: One living creature

Duration: 33 hours

Saving Throw: Will negates and Fortitude half; see text

Spell Resistance: Yes

To Develop: 711,000 gp; 15 days; 28,440 XP. **Seeds:** *charm* (DC 14), *afflict* (DC 14), *drain* (DC 19). **Factors:** 1 action casting time (+20), increase duration by 165% (+4), deal Constitution damage every time a request is refused (ad hoc + 20), afflict target with pain every time a request is refused (ad hoc +20), increase penalty on attack rolls, checks, and saving throws to -4 (+12), threatening act against *charmed* creature does not end the spell (ad hoc +4), add evil descriptor (ad hoc +2). **Mitigating factors:** Burn 5,000 XP during casting (-50).

The caster draws up to her full height, and her appearance becomes fearful as she commands the targeted creature to obey her or writhe in agony. A malicious, dark energy darts from her outstretched hands to strike at the target, who is then entitled to a Will save. A successful save at this juncture negates all further effects.

Should the subject fail, they look on requests that the caster makes in a most favorable manner. Should the caster request something that the target would not usually do, he can choose not to do so, but must immediately make a Fortitude save at the original DC or take 4 points of Constitution damage and suffer such intense pain that he takes a -4 penalty on attack rolls, checks and saving throws. A successful Fortitude save halves the damage and the penalty. The pain effect continues until the request has been agreed to, and the target begins to undertake activity to fulfill the request.

Powerful devils have been known to use this spell to deliberately condition captors to undertake evil tasks of their own free will, and thus pervert any goodness the captor may have had. In many cases, this scenario pleases the devil more than simply quashing the subject's will.

This spell has been used so extensively by the personal servants of Asmodeus that many consider him to be the author of this dread magic.

XP Cost: 5,000 XP.

New Incantations

Rite of the Diabolical See

Transmutation [Evil]

Effective Level: 9th

Skill Check: Knowledge (religion) DC 33, 9 successes

Failure: Death

Components: V, S, M, XP, Special

Casting Time: 90 minutes

Range: Personal

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

An ancient incantation, the purpose of the Rite of the Diabolical See is to unlock in the caster truly fiendish power. Attempted (successfully, at least) only by the most powerful Cardinals of Asmodeus, the incantation is a private affair, the secrets of which are unlocked as the caster advances in the unholy priesthood of the King of Hell.

The Lord of the Nine does not make it easy to seek his favor by means of this rite. For those who fail to cast the incantation precisely (or who do not gain the favor of Asmodeus), death awaits (although a successful Fort save DC 23 means that the caster instead takes 9 points of Constitution drain and is exhausted). Furthermore, the incantation can only be cast in the midnight hour during a new moon. The sky must be wreathed in cloud, and the invocant must conduct the rite in a *desecrated* area. Nine fires are lit in a circle surrounding the caster, while the invocant stands within a shallow pit (3 feet deep) exactly central to these pyres. The invocant appeals to Asmodeus for his blessing nine times, each time calling on the King of Hell by one of his nine titles.

Upon uttering his final appeal, the caster is caught up

in dark flames that leap from within the pit. It is at this time that he knows whether his prayers have been answered or not; for those whom Asmodeus approves take no harm at the flames, instead finding themselves imbued with great power (see Chapter 3 for further details). All others are harmed as detailed above.

Material Components: Rare incense and the blood of celestial creatures to the value of 33,300gp

XP Cost: 500 XP

Special Requirement: The caster of the incantation must have at least 10 levels in the Cardinal of Asmodeus prestige class. Usually, this is the only way that a character can discover the exact phrasings and so forth to cast the incantation. Those without the prerequisite level of advancement in the unholy priesthood can still attempt the invocation, but there is no chance of success (i.e. the incantation will automatically fail, with consequences as detailed above).

Unholy Supplication

Divination [Evil]

Effective Level: 6th

Skill Check: Knowledge (the planes) DC 21, 6 successes

Failure: Attack

Components: V, S, M, SC, B

Casting Time: 60 minutes

Range: See text

Target: Personal

Duration: 12 minutes

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

This incantation is used to contact and speak with a particular Courtier of Perdition. The rite must be performed in the hours before dawn, so that upon completion of the necessary protocols, the chief supplicant has less than 33 minutes before the sun rises. Eight additional casters are required for this incantation, and each caster (including the primary one) must burn 66 gp worth of incense in unholy censers during the invocation.

No image is formed of the devil being sought; however, successful casting of the unholy supplication enables communication between the primary caster and the Courtier for 12 minutes. This tête-à-tête is most often used to enable the supplicant to swear oaths of fealty to the Courtier (see the Devotee of Darkness feat in Chapter 3), but is also used to ask questions of the Courtier or to report on services performed for the Courtier. At the end of the duration, the primary caster is exhausted and automatically contracts the disease devil chills.

In the event that the incantation is not performed perfectly, the caster finds himself attacked by a *summoned* kyton (as if by *summon monster VI* as cast by a 12th level sorcerer).

New Magic Weapon Enhancements

Demon Bane: A demon bane weapon excels at attacking demons. Against such foes, its effective enhancement bonus increases by +3, and it deals an additional +3d6 points of damage. Bows, crossbows and slings so crafted bestow the bane quality upon their ammunition.

Moderate Conjurage; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster I*; Price +1 bonus.

Demon Dread: As with a demon bane weapon, a demon dread weapon excels at attacking demons. Against such foes, its effective enhancement bonus increases by +6, and it deals an additional +6d6 points of damage. If it scores a successful critical hit against the foe, that creature must make a Fortitude save (DC 27) or be destroyed instantly and turned to dust. (This even affects creatures immune to critical hits or death magic.) Bows, crossbows and slings so crafted bestow the bane quality upon their ammunition.

Overwhelming Conjurage; CL 24th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *summon monster IX*; Price +7 bonus.

Hellfire: Upon command, a hellfire weapon is sheathed in vicious flames. The hellfire does not harm the wielder. The effect remains until another command is given. A hellfire weapon deals an extra 1d6 points of damage on a successful hit. This damage is profane in nature, and not subject to resistance. Ranged weapons so crafted bestow the hellfire energy on their ammunition.

Moderate Evocation; CL: 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *hellfire*; Price +2 bonus.

Hellfire Blasting: On command, a hellfire blast weapon is wreathed in black or blood-red flames (this deals no damage to the wielder). On any hit, the fire bursts forth, dealing +3d6 points of bonus hellfire damage. On a successful critical hit it instead deals +6d6 points of hellfire damage (or +9d6 if the critical multiplier is x3, or +12d6 if the critical multiplier is x4, etc.). Bows, crossbows, slings, and other ranged weapons bestow the bonus hellfire damage upon their ammunition.

Overwhelming Evocation; CL: 22nd; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, Craft Epic Magic Arms and Armor, *hellfire storm*; Price: +7 bonus.

Hellfire Burst: A hellfire burst weapon functions as a hellfire weapon that also explodes with hellfire on a successful critical hit. In addition to the extra damage from the hellfire ability, a hellfire burst weapon deals 1d10 points of hellfire damage on a successful critical hit. If the weapon's critical modifier is x3, add an additional 2d10 points of damage instead, if the multiplier is x4, add an additional 3d10 points of hellfire damage. Ranged weapons so crafted bestow the hellfire energy on their ammunition. Even if the hellfire ability is not active, the weapon still deals extra damage on a critical hit.

Moderate Evocation; CL 12th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *hellfire storm*; Price +3 bonus.

Humiliating: A humiliating weapon deals 1 point of Charisma damage from the degradation of self worth it inflicts when it hits a creature. On a critical hit, this damage is instead 1 point of permanent Charisma drain.

Moderate Evocation; CL 10th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *dread word*; Price +3 bonus.

Note: Some weapons with this quality attack the physical appearance of the creature struck, inflicting ugly wounds. These are known as scarring weapons, but the effects are otherwise identical.

Cursed Item Quality—Helltouched: One in every hundred of devil crafted items is helltouched. This curse deals 1d10 points of fire damage to its wielder or wearer (and only the wearer) every round. While is not a con-

cern to devils, it can be a horrible surprise for the mortal who dons a bracer or gauntlet so cursed. Even demons not immune to fire tend to avoid these items, as it weakens their own innate resistance.

As much as devils would like to make this curse more prevalent, it is merely a side-affect of their creating magical items.

New Materials

Soulsteel: This material is made from the extracted souls of the damned. Forged through vile practices into a solid form, this material is extremely hard and deadly. Weapons fashioned from soulsteel deal one point of permanent hit point loss on a critical hit. Armor fashioned from soulsteel provides damage reduction 2/-, which stacks with damage reduction from other sources. Soulsteel has 30 hit points per inch of thickness and hardness 15.

Table 2-1: Pricing for Soulsteel Items

Type of Soulsteel Item	Item Cost Modifier
Light Armor	5,000gp
Medium Armor	10,000gp
Heavy Armor	15,000gp
Weapon	3,000gp
Ammunition	60gp

Hellforge Iron: This dark metal is created by using a cold forging process coupled with a tempering of the blade through hellflames. This material is highly valued in the *Blood War*, because the forging process makes it extremely deadly to demons. When used against demons, weapons crafted of hellforge iron have the critical multiplier increased as noted in table 2-2 below.

Hellforge iron penetrates damage reduction as cold iron. It has 30 hp per inch of thickness and hardness 20.

Table 2-2: Adjusted Critical Multipliers for Hellforge Iron (vs. Demons)

Old Multiplier	New Multiplier
x2	x3
x3	x5
x4	x7

Table 2-3: Pricing for Hellforge Iron Items

Type of Hellforge Iron Item	Item Cost Modifier
Light Armor	3,000gp
Medium Armor	6,000gp
Heavy Armor	9,000gp
Weapon	2,500gp
Ammunition	50gp

New Magic Items

Delay Scrolls: These scrolls are identical to normal magical scrolls, except that, when created, a delayed time of effect is incorporated by the creator.

Delay scrolls are activated as per normal scrolls, but do not take immediate effect. Delays of as short as 6 rounds, and up to as long as a day are possible. Casting dispel magic or counterspelling can take place anytime from the time the scroll is activated until it actually comes into effect.

Spells that specifically target a creature or group of creatures cannot be delayed; only area affect spells can be made into a delay scroll, and the area of effect is always centered on the scroll itself.

Delay Spell, Scribe Scroll; Price: Treat the spell level as being two levels higher than normal, and increase the final price by 20%.

Styx Collar: This magical collar wrought of adamantite and soulsteel keeps the pernicious effects of the Styx at bay. The collar also provides immunity to any water-based attacks (note: natural effects such as rough water, or drowning, do not count as attacks), including holy water; however, contact with holy water neutralizes the collar for six hours, leaving the wearer open to future water-based attacks (and fully susceptible to the effects of the Styx).

Faint abjuration; CL 3rd; Craft Wondrous Item; *avoid planar effects, protection from positive energy*; Price 15,000 gp.

New Minor Artifacts

Mark of the Dark Ministry: Upon being appointed to the Dark Ministry, a pit fiend is granted a *Mark of the Dark Ministry*. The *Mark* not only identifies its wearer as one of the supreme generals of the Legions of Hell, it also confers tremendous power.

The *Mark of the Dark Ministry* grants its wearer a +9 bonus to saves against the spell-like and supernatural abilities of demons and other Chaotic Evil creatures.

When traveling beyond Hell, the wearer is resistant to attempts to return him or her to the Pit: within the Depths Below or within the Mortal Coil, the wearer cannot be forcibly returned to Hell through the use of magic such as *word of chaos* or *holy word*, feats such as Planar Turning, or any special ability to censure fiends.

When in other Realities, the wearer receives a +9 bonus to any saving throws against such attempts that allow one. With turning or censure attacks, the attacker takes a -9 penalty to the checks. The wearer gains a basic saving throw against attacks that do not allow a save.

The *Mark of the Dark Ministry* confers additional powers against diabolical beings. At will, the Minister may use *greater command* on any other devil; the devil receives no save nor does its spell resistance apply. Three times per day, the Minister may use *dominate monster* on any other devil; again the devil receives no save or spell resistance against the ability. The caster level for these powers is 27th. Pit fiends are allowed Will saves (DC 27) to resist. Dukes of Hell and higher ranking devils are immune to these abilities.

Those bearing the *Mark* can cast the epic spell *accursed* as a spell-like ability 3/day. The *Mark* drains the

user of 900 XP each time this ability is used.

Finally, the *Mark* bolsters diabolical troops within 90 feet of the Minister. All troops receive the same resistances against attempts to being returned to Hell when in another Reality as described above; furthermore, all troops (including the Dark Minister) find that their summoning ability is doubled in terms of % of success and the number of devils that can be summoned.

The *Mark of the Dark Ministry* appears as a simple pentagram forged from cold iron drawn from the blood of thousands of humanoid creatures. The pentagram rests on circle of black leather crafted from the protoplasmic remains of a balor; the circle is trimmed with the molted feathers of a solar's wings. Precisely who made the *Marks* is unknown, but common theories suggest As-tarte, a former Lord of the First, or The Overlord himself. When awarded to a newly promoted Dark Minister, the *Mark* magically and painfully stitches itself into the breast of the pit fiend. Although it can be hidden from non-diabolical beings, devils and other "natives" of Hell (including petitioners and gods) automatically sense the power of a *Mark of the Dark Ministry*.

Strong Abjuration, Strong Conjunction, Strong Enchantment; CL 21st; Weight: 1 lb.

Rod of Tyranny: Each Governor of a major city in Hell receives a *rod of tyranny*. These minor artifacts not only reflect the station of the Governor in Hell, but they also confer great power to the wielder.

A *rod of tyranny* may be wielded as a +3 *axiomatic*, *unholy great club*. Once per day, the Governor can call on the rod to exchange either its *axiomatic* or *unholy* quality for another magical quality of equal or lesser value; this change lasts for 9 rounds. Three times per day, the *rod of tyranny* may be used to cast *tyranny* as

though by a 21st level Sorcerer; the Will save DC is 28. Finally, the *rod of tyranny* can be used once per day to close all gates and portals in the city to which it is attuned; to make matters worse, all beings within 90 feet of the *rod* (except for the wielder) are under the effects of *dimensional anchor* for 9 rounds (spell resistance does not apply against this effect).

A *rod of tyranny* is a gargantuan rod of glimmering ebony cold forged from iron drawn from the blood of thousands of humanoid beings. The body of the rod is cluttered with glowing, red runes in the Infernal tongue while its tip is crowned with a golden pentagram. It may only be wielded by beings with Lawful Evil alignments; other beings suffer three negative level while carrying the rod.

Strong Evocation; CL 21st; Weight 10 lbs.

Summoning a Power of Hell

Of all the Powers of Hell, the Duke is the most frequently *summoned* to the Prime Material. Although ranking lower than an Arch-Devil and Lord-Regent, a Duke is far less likely to destroy obviously weak conjurers because a Duke is always looking for an opportunity to increase its access to mortal souls and reaps a great deal more from mortal interaction than the higher ranking devils.

There are a fair number of mortals who seek to treat with a Duke of Hell, knowing full well what they risk in such a venture because of the potential of great reward. Indeed, there are even those who will summon a Duke with the intent of destroying the creature (incidentally and unsurprisingly, it is among this number that the best *summoning* techniques have been developed). Yet, in all cases, the presence of a Duke of Hell will at the very

The Price of Failure

The *incantation of the pit* is not without its dangers. In the event that the incantation goes awry, a fiendish servant appears to attack the casters, or generally cause havoc on the Prime. Because the fiend is *called* to the Prime, rather than *summoned*, it remains until it wishes to leave, or until it is *banished*. As a general rule, the more powerful the Duke *summoned*, the more dangerous the fiend that is sent in his stead if the incantation is performed incorrectly. The table below gives the base creature (or creatures) sent in the stead of a Duke upon the failure of the *incantation of the pit*, along with appropriate scalings of power for Dukes more powerful than usual (the scaling column dictates what the CR increase of the *called* creature should be in relation to the relative 'overpower' of the Duke *summoned*).

Thus, when using the *incantation of the pit* to *summon* Abigor, a CR 35 Duke of Hell from Avernus, his challenge rating is 'overpowered' for his layer by 4 points, and so the barbaz *called* should increase in terms of its challenge rating by 2 points (+1/2 per point of overpower, or $\frac{1}{2} \times 4 = +2$). This increase can be done in whatever fashion seems most appropriate to the DM (e.g. increase the barbaz's HD by 4 in the example given, or call a second barbaz).

Duke's Layer of Origin	Duke's Assumed CR	Creature Called	Scaling
Avernus	31	Barbaz (advanced to 12 HD)	+1/2 CR
Dis	32	Erinyes (advanced to 12 HD)	+1/2 CR
Minauros	33	Kyton (advanced to 14 HD)	+1/2 CR
Phlegethos	34	Fallen Astral Deva	+3/4 CR
Stygia	35	Barregon	+3/4 CR
Malbolge	36	Cornugon	+3/4 CR
Malodomini	37	Fallen Planetar	+1 CR
Cania	38	Gelugon	+1 CR
Nessus	39	Pit Fiend	+1 CR

least impact the life of the conjuror if not an entire area once any form of *summons* is completed (see Chapter One).

Generally, *summons* require a significant length of time to complete, which is why a Duke rarely finds itself in a situation in which it is interrupted when brought into the Prime. It is also important to note that a Duke typically only offer boons *after* it has been summoned to the mortal coil. First, the Duke knows how difficult it is for mortals to breach planar boundaries in the process; it is also aware of the degree of sacrifice necessary for a successful *calling*. Both of these factors indicate how serious (and foolish) the mortal is about establishing a contract. Second, a Duke knows full well that once a *summons* takes place, a certain radius within the *summons* will suffer a spiritual wound for a relatively long period of time, increasing the chance of the Duke's (or the Duke's servants) return to the Prime. These two factors prove to the Duke that a contact is a very likely end result of a *summons*, thus making the excursion to the mortal coil a worthwhile investment of time (and risk) for the Duke.

There are three primary ways to bring a Duke of Hell into the world:

- *Incantation of the Pit*: This powerful incantation allows the uninitiated to *summon* a Duke of Hell to the Prime, but entails the greatest amount of risk for the conjuror and the world at large.
- *Circle of the Nine Pits*: The most traditional means to summon a Duke of Hell, the *circle of summoning* generally protects the conjuror(s) and reveals to the Duke that a potentially lucrative deal is around the corner. However, the cost for this *summons* is steep and almost guarantees that the conjuror's soul is seeped in evil before its casting.
- *Circle of Locking the Nine Gates*: The most powerful of the *summoning* methods, the *circle of locking* is used by those seeking to either bind a Duke of Hell to service or those seeking to destroy or permanently banish a Duke of Hell. This method runs the greatest risk for both the conjuror(s) and the Duke, but guarantees the greatest rewards for the conjuror(s)... at least for a time.

It is worth repeating that not a single one of these means is fool or tamper-proof and that none of them completely eliminate the adverse impact of a Power's presence in the Prime (as described in Chapter One). Those concerned about the effect of a Power's presence in the Prime may make use of *summoning sanctuary* (see above) or similar protections, in addition to the usual precautions.

Incantation of the Pit (cooperative incantation)

Conjuration (Calling)

Effective Level: 9th

Skill Check: Diplomacy DC 27, 1 success; Knowledge (arcane) DC 27, 3 successes; Knowledge (the planes) DC 27, 3 successes; Knowledge (religion) DC 27, 2 successes.

Failure: Attack

Components: V, S, M, XP, SC, B

Casting Time: 9 minutes

Range: Touch

Target: You

Duration: Instantaneous

Saving Throw: None

Spell Resistance: No

Through foul rites, steadfast adherence to obscure cosmic laws, and supplication to the powers of darkness, *incantation of the pit* allows the caster to open a seething rift between the Realities Beyond to call on one of Dukes of Hell. Despite its relative ease in casting, *incantation of the pit* is far less likely than its Forbidden Magic counterpart to conclude successfully for the caster.

The *incantation of the Pit* requires that the casters (of which there can be up to nine) create two *magic circles of protection against evil* with silver dust on subterranean, *unhallowed* ground within an hour before midnight. They must leave at least nine feet of space between the two *magic circles*. Then, by chanting infernal rites within the center *magic circle*, the casters must beseech the appearance of a given Duke of Hell, announcing all the appropriate titles and associations of the Duke in order to draw its attention. The casters must name the proper magicks with which the Duke identifies, the Realities with which the Duke is associated, and finally the ideals the Duke upholds.

When the *incantation* is complete, utter darkness encompasses a 90-foot radius extending from the center *magic circle of protection against evil* for one minute after which the Duke or the Duke's lackey appears within the space between the two *magic circles* (therefore, it is important that the casters can see in magical darkness or can dispel it as per the Duke's spell-like ability caster level). The Duke's appearance may or may not be accompanied by appropriate spectacle depending on the nature of the Duke; regardless, the appearance of a Duke of Hell is a terrible psychic experience that scars the soul of those that witness the arrival. Once the Duke appears, it can remain on the Prime Material for up to 9 minutes, although it has the right to return to Hell at any time prior. The Duke is under no compulsion to be honest or polite with the casters; however, the Duke is unable to take any hostile action unless the Duke is attacked or a caster (or something else) breaches either *magic circle of protection*. At the end of the time frame, the Duke will depart with the appropriate spectacle and the magical darkness will end. All participants will immediately contract *devil chills* and the caster is exhausted.

Failure: Even if the casters speak each of these rites with perfection, there is only a 90% chance that the actual Duke will answer the *summons* and appear in person between the two *magic circles of protection against evil*. Each failed skill check reduces the chance for success by 10%. If there are two consecutive missed skill checks, not only is the incantation ruined, a fiendish servant (see sidebar to determine the power of the servant) of the Duke appears, and one or both (randomly selected by the DM) of the *magic circles of protection against evil* are broken, allowing whatever comes through the *incantation of the Pit* to attack PCs or flee into the unsuspecting surroundings.

Material Component: 5,000 gp in silver dust to create the *magic circles of protection from evil* and a totem and/or materials of interest or significance to the Duke worth at least 500 gp (see the description of each individual Duke for details on appropriate material components).

XP Component: 900 XP (thus, nine casters would each sacrifice 100 XP).

Backlash: The primary caster is exhausted. All participants suffer 2d6 points of Sanity damage upon the Duke's arrival (if you are not using Sanity, then the participants suffer 1d3 points of Wisdom damage). Upon the Duke's departure, all participants contract *devil chills*. The participants are not entitled to saving throws to avoid these effects.

Extra Casters: Up to nine. If there is only one caster, the skill check DCs increase to 29.

Circle of the Nine Pits

Conjuration (Summoning) [Evil, Lawful]

Spellcraft DC: 99

Components: V, S, M, Sacrifice, XP

Casting Time: 9 hours

Range: 75 feet

Duration: 9 minutes (D)

Saving throw: Will Negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: Yes (see text)

To Develop: 891,000 gp, 18 days, 35,640 XP. **Seed:** *summon* (DC 14), *ward* (DC 14). **Factor:** Summon a CR 29 creature (+54), summon unique creature (+60), increase duration 350% (+14), allow CR of Duke to be summoned to be increased by +1 for each additional 200 XP spent during casting (ad hoc +2), dismissible by caster (+2), two *magic circles against evil* (ad hoc +14 DC). **Mitigating Factors:** unique component (ad hoc -9), burn 3,600 XP during casting (-40), increase casting time to 9 hours (-20), 3d6 backlash Sanity (or 2d3 Will) to the primary caster (-3 DC), crushed silver for magic circles 4,500 each (ad hoc -3 DC).

A powerful example of Forbidden Magic, *circle of the Nine Pits* is only cast by the wealthiest, most powerful, and most desperate (or foolish) mortals. This powerful epic ritual allows the casters to *summon* a Duke of Hell in order to discuss potential contracts, ask questions of it, and even establish some kind of treaty or agreement with relatively small chance of the Duke breaching the wards of protection.

The creation of the *circle* requires the same general physical requirements as the *incantation of the Pit* (at night and on *unhallowed* ground). However, it takes a great deal longer to prepare and successfully cast... not to mention it is extremely expensive. Once the arrangements are made, the caster and supporters begin the spell nine hours before midnight, offering supplications to the Powers of Hell, including appropriate sacrifices (see individual Peer descriptions in Chapters 7, 8 and 9 for further details on appropriate sacrifices and offerings). Thereafter, the casters can see Hell in their minds' eye, giving them a final opportunity to abandon their task. If the casters continue, the two *magic circles of protection from evil* are empowered, one within the other. Finally, the Duke of Hell appears in a spectacle of its want within the two *magic circles of protection*. The appearance of a Duke of Hell is a terrible, psychic experience that scars the soul of those that witness the arrival; the primary caster immediately suffers 3d6 points of Sanity damage in addition to whatever Sanity damage the Duke deals.

The Duke is present for up to 9 minutes during which time it may interact with the casters, although it has the right to return to Hell at any time prior. The Duke is under no compulsion to be honest or polite with the casters; however, the Duke is unable to take any hostile ac-

tion unless the Duke is attacked or a caster (or something else) breaches either *magic circle of protection from evil*. The Duke can attempt to breach the ward itself, although it would take a grave insult for the Duke to bother trying; a Duke receives a Will save DC 99 in order to breach one of the two wards one time during the duration of the *summons* (note that in the event that the caster attempts hostilities upon the Duke's person, the save DC requirement to breach the ward is removed, and the Duke instead makes a caster level check to determine whether he can ignore the wards by means of spell resistance). Upon the end of the time frame, the Duke will depart with the appropriate spectacle.

This spell allows the *summons* of the weakest known Duke of Hell, Titivulus. For more powerful Peers, the caster can burn additional XP in order to meet the CR requirement; additionally, in the case of *summoning* an Arch-Devil, 18,000 gp in silver is required. For a Lord of the Nine, 27,000 gp in silver is required. It is important to note that a Lord so *summoned* is not bound by the paltry defenses of this spell and, although unable to remain in the Prime for longer than nine minutes, can reach through the ward and do with the caster as he desires.

XP Cost: 3,600 XP

The Circle of Locking the Nine Gates (epic ritual)

Conjuration (Summoning)

Spellcraft DC: 136 or more

Components: V, S, M, XP, Ritual

Casting Time: see below

Range: 75 feet

Effect: One summoned Duke of Hell

Duration: 27 rounds

Saving Throw: Will negates (see text)

Spell Resistance: No

To Develop: 1,215,000 gp; 25 days; 48,600 XP. **Seed:** *destroy* (DC 29), *summon* (DC 14), *summon* (DC 14), *ward* (DC 14). **Factors:** summon a unique creature (DC +60), summon a CR 29 creature (+54 DC), one *magic circle against evil* (ad hoc +10 DC), maximized damage for destroy seed (ad hoc +10 DC), prevent regeneration from divine damage (ad hoc +2), allow no save against damage from destroy seed (ad hoc +10), allow CR of Duke to be summoned to be increased by +1 for each additional 200 XP spent during casting (ad hoc +2), alter effect of second summon seed to banish (ad hoc +2), banish unique creature (ad hoc +60), enforce banishment for 9d100 years (ad hoc +30). **Mitigating factors:** Eight additional casters contributing 5th level spell slots (-72 DC), 3d6 backlash Sanity (or 1d4 Wisdom damage) (-4 DC) to the primary caster, burn 9,900 XP (in equal shares from all participants) (-81 DC).

One of the greatest spells designed by mortals, The *circle of locking the Nine Gates* allows the mighty or the misguided to accomplish a feat few dare dream of: the ability to permanently defeat a Duke of Hell. In *locking the Nine Gates*, casters may either banish a Duke of Hell from the mortal coil for generations (if not permanently) or may permanently destroy a Duke of Hell, forever freeing the Cosmos of its malevolence. Mighty *locking the Nine Gates* may be, it still requires tremendous sacrifice on the part of those brave or foolish enough to call on its power.

Unlike the *incantation of the pit* and the *circle of the Nine Pits*, *locking the Nine Gates* does not require any

particular time for casting and has no monetary value associated with it. In spite of this, most casters tend to call on its power during the dawn, believing that as the light of a new day emerges, the powers of darkness are at their weakest. And many, through misinformation, also use the very same material components associated with the *circle of the Nine Pits*. In any case, time of day and material components matter not in successfully casting the *locking*. All that is required are stout souls willing to risk more than their lives in the face of eternal tyranny. Still, there are some factors (discussed below) that may have a beneficial impact on the effects of this spell once the Duke of Hell is brought into the mortal coil.

The *circle of the locking the Nine Gates* is best cast in an area that can easily be stained with blood. The blood of all participants is used to create the single *magic circle against evil* – facing inwards – to keep the Duke of Hell in place. As a result, this Forbidden Magic is usually cast on stone foundations. Then, in an invocation to any force opposed to the Powers of Hell, the caster(s) asks for a blessing from on high. As the spell progresses, the blood that creates the *magic circle* takes on a golden or silver sheen. With the final invocation by the caster(s), the Duke of Hell is suddenly dragged from Hell and forced into the center of the *magic circle against evil*. Once the Duke appears, it immediately realizes that it is at grave risk for its very life. The Duke finds that it cannot return to the Pit and that it cannot *summon* or *call* allies for the duration of the spell. What happens next depends on the caster(s) intent.

If the caster seeks to banish the Duke from future summons, he begins to call on the power of his god, patron celestial, creed, or (in extremely rare cases) demonic master, to cast the devil back into the Pit where it can be chained for a millennium. Every three rounds for the next 27 rounds, the Duke of Hell is allowed a Will saving throw to overcome the effect; if the Duke attempts to breach the ward (as described in *circle of the Nine Pits*), he is automatically *banished* (as described below) with no saving throw (the Duke is aware of this, and so can make its own informed choice). If the Duke of Hell ever fails three consecutive saves, he is *banished* to Hell for the next 9d100 years (neither the Duke nor the summoner know how long the *banishment* will last, although a well prepared *legend lore* spell can reveal clues to the truth). Nothing, not even a greater cosmic entity nor a god, can allow the Duke access to the mortal coil during the first 90 years of its imprisonment. The Will save the Duke is forced to make may be further modified by conditions included in the table 2-1 below (unless otherwise noted, the conditions stack).

If the caster hopes to destroy the Duke of Hell, a slightly different effect occurs once the Duke appears. The Duke's entry into to the mortal coil is a painful one as not only is the Duke forced to the Prime, but so too is a portion of Hell. The simultaneous placement of these two realities causes grave damage to the Duke; the Duke immediately suffers 120 points of divine damage, with no saving throw. The Duke does not regenerate this damage during the duration of the spell (although he may use other means to heal). At this point, the caster(s) must enter the *magic circle against evil* in order to battle with the Duke. Should the Duke attempt to breach the wards surrounding him as described in *circle of the Nine Pits*, he automatically suffers 120 points of damage per attempt. Most Dukes commit to battling those insolent enough to summon it in this fashion, calling on all its

might and knowledge to lay low its attackers.

Whether the intent is to *banish* or to destroy the Duke, the duration of the spell is always 27 rounds. If after that time has elapsed the Duke is neither *banished* nor destroyed, the spell ceases to function and the Duke is free. It may *summon* or *call* reinforcements, may return to Hell, or may wander the mortal coil for up to nine days. Most Dukes, unless gravely wounded, are guaranteed to exact immediate revenge against at least one of its tormentors before retreating to slowly ruin the lives of other living adversaries.

The *circle of locking the Nine Gates* can be adjusted to summon more powerful Dukes, Arch-Devils, or even a Lord of the Nine by sacrificing additional XP at the time of casting to meet the CR requirement. Only the primary caster is able to sacrifice this additional XP amount. While a Lord of the Nine can be banished and (theoretically) destroyed by this the use of the *circle of locking the Nine Gates*, any successful binding achieved upon a Lord lasts no more than 9 days. Woe to any foolish enough to attempt this on a Lord-Regent of Hell.

Some casters that attempt the *locking* do so not to *banish* or destroy a Courtier, but rather to “bind” a Courtier to a particular service. Although possibly a foolhardy approach, to garner service by threatening such a powerful creature with long-term *banishment* or destruction, there are cases of this approach working out successfully for the caster. The Courtier can be bargained with during the 27 rounds, and may decide to carry out some request for the caster; however, this will generally incur the wrath of Hell. The Courtier, once having given its word, will generally perform whatever service it has agreed to, but will also attempt to utilize loopholes to avoid or alter the terms of service.

Note: Table 2-4 gives details of factors which may improve the chances of this spell being successful. These factors have not been included in the development of the spell, but are rather blessings of the gods or cosmic entities related to these factors at the time of casting this magick.

XP Cost: 9,900 XP.

Table 2-4: Save DC Modifiers for Locking the Nine Gates (banish)

Primary Caster Condition	Spell's Save DC Modifier
Access to the Dark Speech feat	+3 DC
Access to the Words of Creation feat	+4 DC
Cast on <i>hallowed</i> ground	+7 DC
Primary caster is a good-aligned cleric	+2 DC
Primary caster is Chaotic Good	+5 DC
Primary caster is a Servant of Heaven (Lawful Good)	+5 DC
Primary caster is the Thrall of a Demon	+3 DC